

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 1, 2, 4-8, 11-16, and 18-20 and rejected claims 9 and 10. By this paper, Applicants amended claim 9 to place the present application in condition for allowance. No new matter was added. Claims 1, 2, 4-16, and 18-20 remain pending in the present application and are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Mitacek (U.S. Patent No. 3,556,730). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, this rejection is moot in view of the Examiner interview and the amendment to claim 9. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, and allow the claims.

Examiner Interview

In a telephone conference with Applicants' representative, F. Clay Faries, on October 17, 2005, the Examiner agreed that the current amendment to claim 9 (of incorporating the subject matter of claim 8) would place the present application in condition for allowance. In this interview, the claims of the present application and the prior art of record were generally discussed. The Examiner agreed that all pending claims would be in condition for allowance upon entry of the amendment. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the foregoing rejection of claims 9 and 10, and allow claims 1, 2, 4-16, and 18-20.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims should be in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner wishes to resolve any issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Authorization for Extensions of Time and Payment of Fees

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, Applicants hereby provide a general authorization to treat this and any future reply requiring an extension of time as incorporating a request thereof. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required to Deposit Account No. 06-1315; Order No.

CPCM:0018/FLE.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 4, 2005



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